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New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 33 *(continued)*

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Londoño (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the General Assembly at this session. We are assured that with your experience and skill you will guide our work with great success.

I should also like to congratulate Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana for his excellent performance as President of the forty-eighth session. As President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Insanally conducted the debate in the Open-Ended Working Group of the Assembly on the Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Colombia joined in the adoption by the General Assembly of the report of the Working Group (A/48/47) by consensus on 14 September 1994. We believe it is appropriate to continue the debate in the same manner next year. Although some views were expressed on this item, we believe that there is still a long way to go. Colombia's position is well known. First and foremost, we believe that transparency and confidence are essential in this important effort to present to the international community and our own peoples the kind of reform that will truly reflect the democratization of the international system through the elimination of privileges which were created 50 years ago.

The credibility, representativeness and legitimacy of the decisions of the Council hinge on its methods of work and the effective participation and confidence which Member States place in the Council. A Security Council which is isolated from the majority of Members of the United Nations will not contribute to the revitalization of the Organization and the effective management of the crises it has to deal with. We believe that a thorough, comprehensive reform should be undertaken and not simply an exercise to accommodate the interests of a few pre-selected States and an increase in the privileges of others.

While the nature of the inclusion of the developing world in the international system allowed the creation of exceptional rights for some States, the time has come to change this once and for all. We have the responsibility to ensure that the United Nations shall achieve the objectives for which it was created - to promote development and the well-being of all nations in an environment of equality and justice. We cannot continue from the very heart of this Organization to breach the governing principle of international relations, namely, the principle of the legal equality of States.

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In our opinion, there should be a freeze on the category of permanent members and it should gradually be eliminated. Those seats are the result of negotiations conducted in the past which have no validity in our times. Likewise, the veto should be restricted and eventually eliminated. Clearly, the idea of its extension to more members of the Security Council should be discarded.

We believe that the best way to adjust the Council to the new realities is through an increase in the number of its non-permanent members. Similarly, we could agree to re-election of some seats according to the decisions of the General Assembly on a case-by-case basis. Thus the whole membership would endorse those States that had gained the confidence and support of the international community. Clearly, the main criteria would continue to be equitable geographical representation and the equality of States.

While we understand the need for some degree of discretion in the work of the Security Council, it is unacceptable to have all major issues discussed behind closed doors as is the case at present. This weakens the confidence among the Members of the Organization, takes away from the credibility of the decisions of the Security Council and limits their acceptance by Member States. The Council should discuss its items in open debates. Transparency does not limit the effectiveness of the Council.

There should be formal briefings by the Security Council for the benefit of Member States. In addition, there are other mechanisms stipulated in the Charter that could promote ongoing communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

A subsidiary organ of the General Assembly created in accordance with Article 22 of the Charter could contribute to the formulation of Security Council decisions and receive information before decisions are adopted. Such a subsidiary organ could likewise enlarge the application of certain Articles of the Charter, such as Article 11.

The chairman of such a subsidiary body, who could be the President of the General Assembly or one of the Assembly's Vice-Presidents, could be invited to participate in the formal and informal meetings of the Security Council. Thus the President or Vice-President would ensure channels of communication and also ensure that the recommendations of the Member States are appropriately reflected in the Council's decisions.

The dynamic of the Working Group has shown that simplistic solutions should be discarded, that the expansion of privileges for a minority is not acceptable, and that the new system which may stem from this exercise should recognize the fact that democratization in international relations is a reality which should be appropriately reflected in the United Nations over the next 50 years.

Mr. Flores Olea (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The General Assembly has before it today document A/48/47, which contains the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, established under resolution 48/26 adopted last year in this very Hall.

My delegation wishes to thank for his hard work the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group, your predecessor, Sir, in the post of President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, and also the Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representatives of Finland, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein, and of Singapore, Ambassador Chew Tai Soo. Thanks to their efforts, progress has been made in this difficult exercise.

Throughout the year there was a productive exchange of views, which made it possible to pinpoint the major problems that we face in the sensitive task of adapting the Security Council to the new era, so different from that in which the Council was created.

In accordance with the approach taken by resolution 48/26, the Open-ended Working Group should pay equal attention to increasing the membership of the Security Council and to other matters, particularly the Council's working methods and its relationship with the General Assembly. This is not a mere numerical exercise; rather, it concerns the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security in the face of the challenges of a world very different from the one in which it came into being.

My delegation has supported the need for a thorough reform of the Council, and we repeat our conviction that such reform cannot be confined to satisfying the aspirations of the new economic Powers. That would mean failing the international community, and we would justify the greatest criticism of the United Nations - that it often looks after the interests of the great Powers. It would also mean weakening the universality of the United Nations and fostering a lack of confidence in it; the

resulting disillusionment and criticism would be all too understandable.

The international community deserves to have a legitimate and effective Security Council. These two conditions demand a truly representative organ, reflecting the current situation, and working diligently and vigorously.

In this framework, some hold the view that the number of members of the Council determines its ability to act and that therefore any increase would have negative effects. We do not believe that that is the correct approach. A majority of countries claims that, within manageable limits, Security Council membership should be increased in order to make the Council more representative of the regions - Asia, Africa and Latin America - which traditionally have been particularly underrepresented.

It is often forgotten that, under the Charter, the Security Council has no authority of its own. Strictly speaking, the other 169 Member States have delegated to the Council specific responsibilities and authority with regard to peace and security. For this very reason its composition must reflect the growing membership of the United Nations.

Let us also recall the Council's responsibilities towards the General Assembly; we are the organ that conferred on the Council responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The first Charter mechanism to link the two organs is the annual report that the Council has to submit to the Assembly in order to keep Member States duly informed on the way in which the Council is discharging its functions.

Unfortunately, in practice this substantive obligation has been transformed into nothing more than a belated formality, with little content. Last year we were fortunate enough to have a timely report and, for the first time in almost 50 years, it was presented personally by the Council's President - Ambassador Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg of Brazil that month - whom we again thank.

We thought that an excellent precedent had been set. Regrettably, that does not seem to be the case. This year we are again experiencing the delay to which we have become accustomed.

Furthermore, despite our insistence, the Council's report has been treated as a mere matter of procedure, when the mandate given in the Charter relates to a substantive, reasoned and amply explanatory document. A substantive report of the kind we are proposing should include, among other elements, the matters being considered by the Council, the specific conditions under which they were brought before it, the considerations that were taken into account when adopting decisions and the results achieved.

One of the objectives of the Working Group is to introduce greater transparency and democracy, and therefore greater effectiveness and legitimacy into the work of the Security Council, which was never conceived as the closed preserve of only a few States. Several proposals have been made.

My delegation repeats that we believe there must be a summary report of informal consultations; a rapporteur might be the right mechanism. In any case, wider publicity should be given to the consultations between the President of the Security Council and the various regional groups. Another improvement would be the establishment of a system whereby members of the Council reported to their respective groups on matters under consideration by the Council. Greater communication between the Security Council and States affected by its decisions is urgently required.

These procedural reforms do not require amendments to the Charter. They could be incorporated gradually into the practice of the Council or else into the final rules of procedure that its Members would eventually have to adopt.

Regarding the necessary increase in the membership of the Security Council, Mexico believes that there is no justification for the inclusion of new permanent members. The specific weight of certain countries in the international community cannot be disregarded, but this in itself does not warrant granting them exceptional privileges, such as the right to be members of the Security Council for an indeterminate period with extraordinary and disputable prerogatives, especially in a constantly changing world that aspires to true legal equality among States.

We acknowledge the wishes expressed by certain countries, and after careful consideration Mexico is inclined to go along with the idea of an expansion of the membership of the Security Council comprising new, non-permanent members and, in due course, others with an extended mandate or with the possibility of more frequent rotation. The selection of those non-permanent

members or of those serving on a rotation basis or with an enlarged mandate would first and foremost be decided upon by each regional group.

The decision-making process in the Council is subject to the assent of its five permanent members. We know that this privilege, granted in San Francisco to the victors of the Second World War, paralysed the Council in the days of the cold war, and for almost five decades prevented it from acting effectively. But we are now living in different times. In the last four years, we have seen a reduction in the exercise of the veto. This new situation is encouraging and it is precisely for this reason that we can ask ourselves if the time has not come to correct some of the political necessities of 1945 and their distortions.

There was a flagrant contradiction in the Charter from the very outset: despite the fact that the United Nations was to be founded on democratic principles, the political reality of those times made it necessary to grant a certain privileged, and in a way irregular status, to five of its members. It was said that the veto would oblige those Powers to take a unified stand and thus reach clear-cut agreements. However, it soon became apparent that the veto not only did not ensure such unity of views but that it in fact made it possible for the Powers to maintain their differences and defend their own interests without making any real efforts to have their views converge.

Mexico has always opposed the veto because it runs counter to the principles of democracy and the equality of States before the law. Moreover, rather than making it less difficult to reach agreements among the nations it fosters differences and confrontation. But the exceptional circumstances that gave rise to the veto at the end of the Second World War have now, fortunately, been overcome. My delegation maintains that it is not possible to revive artificially the conditions of the past, or to repeat the errors imposed by a political situation that no longer exists, by granting the veto to possible new members of the Council. To accept this would be to contradict once more the very foundations of the Organization. Nor is this all: it would once again present the States and the international public at large with the spectacle of the United Nations as an organ more interested in protecting the interests of a few Powers than in attending to the urgent needs of the international community, particularly when economic capabilities are invoked as the main reason for being elected. Neither the United Nations nor the Security Council can be compared to the board of directors of a business. Nothing would be more degrading for the prestige and image of the United Nations than artificially to revive non-democratic arrangements to accommodate the wishes of only a few countries.

We repeat that it would be desirable to eliminate the veto, while recognizing the difficulty of this idea, because it seems unimaginable in *realpolitik* that any of the five permanent members would be sufficiently disinterested - and the clear-sighted - to recognize the political requirements of today and to give up that right. Such fantasy can only feed our illusions but can go no further. None the less, we should not unnecessarily repeat the errors of the past.

We should aspire to regulate the use of the veto by the current five permanent members, whose number - I repeat - should not be increased for any reason. In this connection, we were encouraged by the proposal made before this Assembly a few days ago by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, Mr. Gareth Evans, namely that we gradually dilute the veto by requiring that, in order for it to be valid, at least two of the permanent members would have to agree to block the decision of the Council.

At the San Francisco Conference, in 1945, Australia also proposed that the veto not apply in cases involving the exercise of the Council's mandate under Chapter VI. This would be in keeping with the spirit of the Charter, granting the five permanent members the exclusive responsibility of adopting sanctions under Chapter VII without the possibility of paralysing the Council's efforts to find a peaceful, negotiated solution in accordance with Chapter VI. We believe the time has come to reconsider this proposal with a broad, long-term political vision that goes beyond vested interests.

The decisions of the Working Group will be reflected in reforms of the Charter of the United Nations. The procedure for bringing about such reforms is complex, since it requires approval by two-thirds of its membership, including the five permanent members. That is to say, it cannot be imposed.

Amending the Charter is a two-way street. Without the support of the permanent members of the Security Council, no amendment can enter into force. But the permanent members cannot forget that any amendments they may propose must also have the support of two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly. In other words, to reform the Charter, it is necessary to consider the general interest and not impose pressures or unilateral

demands in order to bend the will of States with greater needs.

Mexico supports the decision contained in the report that the Working Group should continue its work. We must redouble our efforts to make positive strides. With good faith and good will we could arrive relatively easily at conclusions that are shared by all and that would lead to a principle of consensus. But we also understand that in this task we cannot be simplistic. Nor can we just parade decisions, losing sight of the final objective: a substantive reform that will take account of the interests of all and avoid hasty arrangements that satisfy the interests of only a few.

We should not establish any fixed dates or deadlines for the completion of this task. It is now time to negotiate, it is true, but without undue haste. Such amendments well deserve our thorough consideration.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Allow me first to extend my thanks and congratulations to President Samuel Insanally and the Ambassadors of Singapore and Finland for their wise and effective guidance of the Working Group whose report is now before the Assembly.

The holding at this point in time of a public debate on the question of equitable representation, increased membership and other issues relating to the workings of the Security Council is both timely and important as it affords us all an opportunity to put forward our views and proposals and, at the same time, to try and crystallize the discussions that took place in the General Assembly's Working Group in the light of the ideas put forward at the forty-eighth session and those propounded by Member States in their interventions in the general debate at this present session of the General Assembly.

My delegation's concern that there should be meetings devoted to a discussion of this question stems from our conviction that the procedural decision adopted by the General Assembly at the end of the forty-eighth session to continue discussion of the agenda item within the Working Group during the forty-ninth session should have been supported by a political frame of reference and political guidelines that could be gleaned by the Assembly from the wide-ranging and fecund discussions that took place, particularly, within the Working Group, and which gave birth to some very interesting ideas.

It is in that context that my delegation proposed an amendment to operative paragraph 2 of the decision requesting the Working Group to take duly into account the views expressed at the forty-ninth session, both during the general debate and during discussions on agenda item 33 of the session's agenda.

This flows also from our conviction that the modest progress achieved so far towards identifying the problems, concepts and the methodology to be adopted in dealing with all the issues involved in reforming this major and sensitive organ whose role impacts on international peace and security and is so vital in international affairs, was made possible thanks to our far-reaching frank discussions. The ideal formula for restructuring the Council must be based therefore on an international consensus derived from a wide-ranging, democratic and transparent debate in which care should be taken not to marginalize the developing countries which did not participate either in founding the Organization or in drafting its Charter.

The importance attached by Algeria to the question of reforming the Security Council with them of ensuring equitable representation on the Council as well as the effectiveness, transparency and democratization of that body's deliberations and decision-making procedures, was demonstrated by the pioneering initiative of Algeria, together with nine other Member States, to inscribe on the agenda of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly in 1979 an item entitled, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council." Since then, Algeria has continued to contribute effectively to placing this vast, multidimensional endeavour in the context of the overall framework of reforming the United Nations system as a whole, and of the Security Council in particular, in a manner that would be compatible with the new realities of the world situation.

With regard more specifically to the Security Council, Algeria submitted a detailed written account of its ideas and approach during the discussions held in the General Assembly's Open-Ended Working Group on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other questions relating to the Council's workings.

Thus, from the methodological point of view, my delegation opted for a comprehensive approach and expounded its ideas on the basis of two postulates. The first concerned the inequitable nature of the Council's

present composition and its geographical and cultural imbalance. In addition, there is the fact that, given the large increase in membership in recent years, from a purely numerical point of view, the Council does not reflect the Organization's present-day composition. The second postulate concerns the climate created by the end of the cold war, which has given the international community the hope that it could look forward to the emergence of a new world governed by law, an order based on democracy and participation that would opt for consensus in decision-making and that would ensure that this should be reflected in the Council's functioning and procedural working methods.

Accordingly, with regard to the issue of increased membership of the Council, we have focused on the criteria of equitable representation and the logical implication of the need to give priority to seeing that any increase of whatever kind in the number of members should help redress the present imbalance. We have also emphasized the need to abide by the criteria enshrined in the Charter and by the requirement that regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States, be considered in any attempt to adjust the regional balance and the need to enshrine the principle of rotation in discharging the Council's responsibilities, in keeping with the principle of the sovereign equality of States, just as it is also necessary to take into account the readiness of Member States to shoulder their responsibilities in the achievement and maintenance of collective security.

In this same context, we have frankly and clearly drawn attention to the need to regulate and limit the areas and subjects which may continue to be subject to the veto. We have voiced our principled conviction that the granting of veto power to other Member States would not be conducive to democratization of the Council or make it more effective. To the contrary, such a step would be likely to worsen the imbalances that exist between developed and developing countries and give rise to competition and prejudicial contradictions that could affect the political climate prevailing in the world and within regional groupings.

During the discussions in the Working Group, several delegations were unanimous that reform of the Council's working methods and procedures, involves certain political aspects that cannot be ignored and that, consequently, it would not be reasonable to oppose an equitable increase in the Council's membership under the pretext that the addition of a number of seats would jeopardize the Council's efficiency.

It also became clear that equitable representation on the Council is essential to the strengthening of its political and moral authority and would ensure for its resolutions the respect and voluntary implementation that are necessary for its efficacy. It was emphasized also that there is a need to address the economic and social causes that lie behind many disputes in the world. It is in this context that we should be aware of the importance of the Council's relationship with its environment and its natural partners - the non-members of the Council, on whose behalf it acts - as well as with the other main bodies of the Organization, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and regional organizations and arrangements, which, pursuant to the Charter, have an important role to play in the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes. Some very useful ideas were put forward in this context with the aim of promoting greater interaction between the Council and its partners on the basis of transparency, cooperation and concerted action.

My delegation has reached the conclusion that it is essential for realism to be combined with ambition in addressing this question, in both its political and its legal aspects, if we are to effect a qualitative reform of the Security Council, that would establish new working methods and safeguard the Council against the blocking of its functioning and against its being monopolized in the service of narrow national interests that would be detrimental to its effectiveness and its credibility.

Accordingly, we have called for an honest reading of Article 24 of the Charter as this would highlight the need to take effective account of the contractual relationship enshrined in this fundamental text, pursuant to which the parties that confer the Council's mandate - all the Member States - have the legal right to exercise political and legal control over the Council's actions and resolutions. In this context, my delegation has stressed that it is high time the International Court of Justice, on the initiative of the General Assembly, was given the competence to determine the constitutionality of resolutions adopted by the Security Council.

With regard to the procedural aspect of implementing arrangements or possible amendments to the Charter, my delegation once again calls for the convening of a general review conference - something for which the Charter makes provision - to enable all

Member States, particularly the new ones, to participate in a rebirth of the Organization.

Our discussions have revealed the sensitive nature and complexity of this question. Finding a formula that would be satisfactory to all may appear to be an extremely difficult undertaking. However, this difficulty should not be used as a pretext to opt out of the necessary transparent and democratic debate in order to replace it by bargainings that serve nothing but narrow individual ambitions. The difficult nature of the task should not dissuade us from continuing our efforts and collective discussions toward the desired consensus on a restructuring formula that would guarantee equitable representation, and ensure the effectiveness and credibility of the Security Council.

Clearly, the world is now in a position to take advantage of a political climate that favours the introduction of meaningful reform of a Security Council, whose structures and philosophy were the products of a particular historical context and of political and military alliances that have become obsolete. So, let us learn the lessons of the past and benefit from past experiences so that we may satisfy the expectations of the peoples of the United Nations, who aspire after a more united world, where the role of the Organization is strengthened on the basis of the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria): For the second time in recent years the General Assembly is considering the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Since last year's debate the Working Group of the whole has had an extensive exchange of views. During the general debate of the current session many heads of delegation, including the Foreign Minister of my country, referred again to the question of reform of the Security Council. We should therefore now be in a position to advance the debate in order to prepare the ground adequately for the necessary decisions, which, in the final analysis, will have to be taken at the political level, as was made clear this morning by the Permanent Representative of Singapore.

On the eve of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary we must ensure that it is well equipped to meet future challenges. A reformed Security Council that can rely on universal support will be of vital importance to the Organization in the decades to come.

Austria's position on this issue is as follows.

First, the basic guideline for the future composition of the Council is the need to ensure its representative character as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of its work. The envisaged enlargement should therefore be limited: the number of additional members should be relatively small. We believe that the future composition of the Council should in any case not exceed 25 members.

Secondly, the work of the Security Council has in the past greatly benefitted from the input of both categories of its members - permanent and non-permanent. Thus the necessary continuity in its work and an appropriate reflection of the international power structure were combined with democratic elements ensuring representativeness and providing fresh ideas for the solution of impending problems. We therefore argue for the maintenance of such a balance between permanent and non-permanent members.

Thirdly, in the debate so far the case has been made for additional permanent members. In our view, the choice of such members must reflect political and economic realities and be based on their ability to contribute financially as well as to the overall peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations.

Fourthly, the future composition of the Security Council should reflect, through an appropriate balance in its membership, the reality and plurality of today's world. In our view, the addition of a limited number of regional seats endowed with rights similar to those of the existing permanent members could meet these requirements.

Fifthly, despite some recent improvements - which we see as important steps - the question of accessible information channels between members and non-members of the Council remains an important one and constitutes an essential part of the discussion on the future composition of the Council. The degree to which Member States feel that they are represented by the Council depends to a large extent on the existing possibilities for interaction with the Council. I listened with great interest to the constructive proposal in this regard put forward this morning by the Ambassador of Brazil.

Austria, as a country with a longstanding tradition in United Nations peace-keeping, has a special interest in closer cooperation and dialogue between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries.

We therefore welcome emerging improvements in this area. In this context, we attach less relevance to the concrete procedure than to the results of such improved interaction. We welcome initiatives which have already been taken in this context and value in particular the initiatives of New Zealand and Argentina. They should be taken seriously into consideration. Improved channels of information are also urgently necessary with regard to problems resulting for any countries from their compliance with sanctions regimes.

Let me submit some considerations on how we might best further proceed in the discussion of the item before us. After this debate in plenary, at an appropriate time the Working Group of the Whole will be re-established. The views of Member States on the issue are by now widely known. We should therefore concentrate our work on concrete issues in the form of a focused discussion. To this end, we could define "building blocks" which might become constituent elements for a possible consensus or for the emergence of positions which might carry wide support. This process could be achieved by a combination of informal discussions within the Working Group, guaranteeing adequate transparency and consultation among interested members.

Among possible elements which need further refinement through this process, I should like to mention a few: a closer indication as to the upper limit of the Security Council membership, bearing in mind that concrete figures will only result from a final agreement on the structure of the composition of the Council; an appropriate identification of principles that will have to be taken into account in formulating the future structure of the Council, such as, for instance, the most adequate relationship in relative numbers between permanent and non-permanent members; possible restrictions in the exercise of the right to veto - here, I should like to refer to the interesting remarks made this morning by the Permanent Representative of Egypt; and an agreement on the types of membership to be envisaged, in particular a further elaboration of proposals to create a new category of Security Council membership in the form of regional seats, including the selection process and the specific rights of these members.

In our view, a discussion of such possible "building-blocks" would help us to narrow the number of possible options and to define possible avenues leading to the large agreement that will be necessary if we want to finalize the ongoing process of constructing a Security Council that will both reflect today's reality and meet the high expectations vested in this Organization.

Mr. Caputo (Italy): I should like first to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are convinced that your experience will guide our work with great success.

It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the Italian Government at this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly on an issue to which we attach special importance: the first real reform of the Security Council since the birth of the United Nations. My country has shown its interest in this subject by playing an active role in the Open-ended Working Group that the General Assembly set up for this purpose last year; and we pride ourselves on having presented a proposal that we judge to be concrete, comprehensive and in the interest of all countries.

Allow me to give a quick thumbnail sketch of our project. We would keep the number of permanent members at the current five, without adding new ones, because recent historical developments have shown that very little is permanent in modern international politics. We would instead increase the number of non-permanent members from 10 to 20. The 10 new seats would be allotted, in turn, to a group of 20 or eventually 30 Member States. The main criteria that could be adopted to identify these countries are already listed in Article 23 of the Charter. The first is their ability and willingness to participate in peace-keeping operations with financial, human and military resources. Let us not forget that the main purpose of the Council is to maintain peace and security in the world. The peace-keeping budget already amounts to three times the regular budget of the Organization and is increasing. The two other criteria listed in Article 23 are equitable geographic distribution and a country's contribution to the other purposes of the Organization. In addition, other criteria could be taken into consideration, such as population size, economic resources and the willingness to contribute to humanitarian causes.

As we see it, the 20 to 30 countries should be subject to periodic review of their performance. In substance, this formula would guarantee the continuous presence in the Council of the current permanent members and at the same time a more frequent presence for 20 or 30 mid-size to large-size countries. Moreover, the larger number of members would make it easier to

redress the present geographic imbalance on the Council. Indeed, after 50 years, it is about time for a new deal.

We are convinced that our project would also benefit the 80 countries that have never been elected to the Security Council and the 43 that have served only once. In fact, as statistics clearly indicate, smaller States have been shut out of the Council by the fierce competition within their regional groups for the few available non-permanent seats, sometimes even despite existing regional agreements. By sheltering these small countries from the competition of the larger ones, we would provide them with greater access to the 10 non-permanent seats with normal rotation. Of course, one might argue in favour of open competition for all 20 non-permanent seats on a basis of absolute parity, but such an arrangement would clearly place the smaller States at a disadvantage, since they would still risk being elbowed out by the larger ones. Finally, we believe that a Council of 25 members would still be able to function efficiently and effectively, as the proportion between the original organization of the Security Council and the future one would be maintained.

We have noted that other interesting and constructive proposals and suggestions have been presented, while many others may be in the pipeline. We welcome them all. In short, we intend to continue to participate in the exercise with an open mind and a constructive spirit, and to work together with other Member States to obtain the widest possible consensus. But we insist that everyone - even the representatives of the smallest countries - be partners at all times in the process, including consultation.

We fully share the view that there are other, equally important issues concerning the reform. In addition to the quest for an enlarged Security Council, there is a compelling need for a reform of its methods and procedures and a thorough review of the Council's relations with the General Assembly, other organizations, and non-member countries. The Council is still operating under the provisional rules of procedure, adopted in 1946. It is high time the provisional rules were made permanent and were adapted to the times in which we live.

It is only natural that the General Assembly, as the embodiment of the membership of the United Nations, should expect thorough and prompt briefings on the Security Council's activities. At present, however, this relationship is limited to a single annual report. This is not sufficient. Countries not members of the Security Council that contribute troops to United Nations peace-keeping operations should, for example, be assured of regular consultation on the conduct of an operation in which the lives of their soldiers are at stake. A consultative mechanism could be set up by extending Article 44 of the United Nations Charter to operations conducted under Chapter VII.

Finally, greater transparency is required in the workings of the Security Council. To this end, we must adopt measures to provide the United Nations membership with more regular information on the debates in the Security Council and on the various positions that emerge thence.

There are two final points that I would like to raise. First, the reform of the Security Council is too crucial an issue to be left to the work of restricted committees. The largest possible number of Countries - including, I repeat, the smaller ones - must be put in a position to participate. Therefore, in order to avoid overburdening small Missions, we suggest that the ad hoc Working Group not meet during the regular session of the General Assembly - that is to say, not before January of next year. Frankly, we should not feel bound by deadlines, no matter how important the fiftieth anniversary celebration may be, because a mistake today might prove irreversible. Therefore, let us not hurry, please. As we say in Italy, "Premature babies are often stillborn."

Secondly, we feel that a consensus must be reached on the principles of the reform before we start singling out the countries that might be eligible for one league or the other.

May I conclude by assuring the Assembly that we shall continue to act in an open-minded and constructive way within the Working Group. We welcome all new proposals, criticisms and suggestions. Our final goal, one which I am sure we all share, remains that of securing greater participation, greater democracy, and greater efficiency and effectiveness for the Council.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) *(interpretation from French):* Allow me first of all, Sir, on my own behalf and on that of my delegation, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly and on your outstanding leadership of our work.

In addition, it is my pleasure to pay a tribute to Ambassador Insanally, Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, for his constructive role in seeking

common ground and for his contributions to the process of democratizing the Organization and its organs in order to fulfil the international community's oft-expressed aspirations in the framework of the common effort to establish a more just, more equitable, new international order.

Mr. Chaturvedi (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We also wish to salute the unflagging efforts of Ambassador Chew Tai Soo and Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein in leading the Group forward, making it possible for it to draw up practical recommendations so that in 1995 we will be able to celebrate the anniversary of a revitalized Organization whose institutions enjoy more equitable representation, transparency and democracy in the decision-making process.

The African Ministers for Foreign Affairs, meeting in New York, welcomed the constructive process seeking to improve the functioning of the Security Council to reflect the new realities of our contemporary world and the contributions made by the countries not members of the Council, particularly the developing countries, in the maintenance of international peace and security. The African Ministers reaffirmed the importance of close and consistent cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly. They welcomed the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 48/246 of 29 July 1994, which is a new milestone in the creation of more effective interaction between those bodies, in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the Charter. My delegation has at various times stressed this important aspect of the question to make it possible for the international community to contribute more to the management of world affairs for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We noted with great interest the limited but important initiatives taken by the Council to promote greater transparency in some of its working methods. We urge the Council to continue in that effort to respond to the aspirations of the majority of delegations, as expressed during the deliberations of the Working Group established under resolution 48/26, implementation of which is in keeping with the relevant provisions of the Charter.

The concern over ensuring collective security and allowing members of the international community to participate actively in shouldering the collective responsibility for security, as entrusted to the international community by the Charter, compels us to work together to facilitate the participation of countries not members of the Council in its deliberations. The Secretariat's new practice of convening informal meetings with the participation of some members of the Council, as well as the consultations held with troop-contributors, are encouraging, but could be improved upon and institutionalized.

We are convinced that recourse to Article 29 of the Charter for the establishment of one or more subsidiary organs subordinate to the Security Council has the advantage of allowing the Council to entrust deliberations on issues of crucial importance to those larger bodies. The credibility of decisions taken by the Council would only be enhanced and strengthened.

Furthermore, the proliferation of peace-keeping operations and the experience gained by the Organization and by troop-contributing countries lend force to the idea of adapting the formula of using various types of consultations. Accordingly, we deem very useful the idea of organizing consultations between the Council and interested States before a decision is taken on the timeliness, goals or duration of peace-keeping operations, as well as on the resources for implementing them, in order to give them every chance of success.

This is not an innovation for us, but rather a matter of activating provisions of the Charter, in particular Article 47, paragraph 2, which allows the Military Staff Committee to invite any Member of the Organization to be associated with it when the efficient discharge of the Committee's responsibilities requires the participation of that Member in its work.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its member States attach special importance to the role of the Council in the areas of peace-keeping and preventive diplomacy. The African Heads of State reiterated last June at the Tunis Summit their desire to act not only within the regional framework of the OAU to prevent conflicts through the central African mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts but also through the active participation of African contingents in peace-keeping operations on our continent and in other areas of conflict outside of Africa.

Africa therefore pledges its complete cooperation and readiness to participate in discussions and decision making of the Council. It will spare no effort to help to increase the efficiency of the Council in this area and to

ensure success for the United Nations in the maintenance of peace.

We are convinced that the Working Group of the General Assembly has reached a stage in its deliberations which makes it possible, with a bit more effort, to outline concrete and feasible recommendations with regard to an increase in the membership of the Council and to its functioning. In this context, we wish to recall the position expressed by the Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement stressing the inadmissibility of any pre-established selection. We must carefully apply the provisions of Articles 2 and 23 of the Charter, which spell out the appropriate criteria for and prohibit any selectivity or subjectivity in the allocation of seats, thus asserting the Council's accessibility to any Member State that contributes to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, including the promotion of universal values such as human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the development of human resources.

One of the sacrosanct principles of our Organization is equitable regional representation. In this regard, we consider that Africa, like Asia and Latin America, is entitled to be equitably represented on the Security Council. I shall take the liberty of recalling the terms of the African ministerial declaration which states that at least two permanent seats should be given to this continent in the course of the current restructuring process. It goes without saying, in our opinion, that rotation continues to be essential, including within regional groups. It is indeed contrary to the very essence of the democratization we are trying to achieve in a Security Council adapted to new realities to offer special status, in rather questionable fashion, to a new category of States or seats.

The delegation of Tunisia welcomes the positive spirit of consensus that has marked the work of the Security Council in recent years. Such a spirit could further enhance the Council's credibility and gain enthusiastic support from the Member States were it consistently reflected by the full, non-discriminatory implementation of all of its decisions.

Consensus should, in our opinion, enshrine the principle of the indivisibility of collective security, confer proper legitimacy on decisions and guarantee their applicability.

In this respect, we would like to encourage the members of the Security Council, and especially the permanent members, to continue actively seeking consensus; as was stressed in the ministerial declaration of the non-aligned countries, this would certainly spare the Council a paralysis resulting from the exercise of unreasonable privileges that are ill-suited to the new spirit in international relations and could threaten regional and international peace and security.

Mr. Insanally (Guyana): My delegation very much welcomes the opportunity which item 33 presents us for reviewing the progress of the Open-ended Working Group, established by resolution 48/26 to consider all aspects of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council. An assessment of what has been achieved thus far and what remains to be done to fulfil the mandate of the resolution will serve to orient our future work with a renewed sense of purpose.

The brief, even laconic report presented by the Working Group to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly does not do justice to the extensive and enlightened discussions which took place on all the issues that arose for consideration. Paragraph 8 is limited to highlighting only such main areas as the question of size and composition of the possible increase in the Council's membership. While recognizing that there was a convergence of views that the Council should be enlarged, it states that the scope and nature of the enlargement would require further exploration.

Admittedly, circumstances did not permit a more comprehensive and detailed account of the Working Group's deliberations. Guided by the principle that all aspects of its mandate are interlinked and must be settled simultaneously, areas of specific agreement could not be listed. Yet it would be a great pity, in the view of my delegation, if the tacit nature of the report were now to invite a return to an exposition of matters already amply ventilated. Were this to happen, we would waste a great deal of time and perhaps lose the unique opportunity we have at this moment to create a more democratic and efficient Security Council.

We would therefore do well to remind ourselves, as we are about to embark on further work at this forty-ninth session, of the primary aim of the exercise in which we are engaged. Clearly, our task is to bring about an increase in the Council's membership that would be more representative of the United Nations today. The present size and composition of the Council cannot be deemed by any yardstick to be equitable now. The Permanent

Representative of Indonesia and Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement reflected in his statement this morning some of the outstanding concerns which we share in this regard.

Thus far, much of our discussion of the question of size and composition appears to have been largely driven by financial considerations allowing for the addition of one or two States to the category of permanent member. Understandably, peace-keeping operations, which are today the main burden of the Council, demand significant resources such as these new members are thought capable of providing. We believe, however, that permanent membership should not be limited only to a select group of major military or economic Powers, but should also be open to developing countries which have a contribution to make to the Council's work. We rather fear, however, that any proposal for additional permanent members may now quickly become bogged down by the question of whether any such new members should have the right of veto.

These aspirants could insist on having the same entitlement as all other permanent members, since anything less may suggest an inferior status. However, in the light of the history of the condemnation of the veto, even of its application in particular instances by the permanent members themselves, it would be reasonable to assume that any suggestion of an extension of the veto could be controversial and lead to an early impasse in the discussions of the Working Group.

Moreover, we do not think that there can be ready agreement on additional permanent members unless there is a concomitant acceptance of an appropriate number of non-permanent members that would satisfy the requirement of a balanced and equitable representation of all States - both developed and developing - on the Council.

As a priority task, some reasonable ratio will have to be found between the numbers of permanent and non-permanent members, as well as any new category of members that may emerge to cater for regional representation on a rotational basis. Such regional representation can conceivably satisfy the interests of larger countries without unduly swelling the ranks of the permanent members. It is important to ensure, however, that no one region is over-represented in terms of numbers of permanent members, and that there is a proper balance among all categories. To this end, the overall composition of the Council must be reviewed to ensure that the principle of equity is fully respected.

Many States have provided, through their written submissions to the Secretary-General and their statements to both the plenary and the Working Group, their several concepts of a model Security Council. Although there are some differences of specification, the principal features of design are common to most submissions, namely, equitable representation, transparency and effectiveness of operations. As far as the question of numbers is concerned, the eventual figure seems to oscillate somewhere between 20 and 25. With these broad characteristics in mind, the Working Group can, I think, now go to the drawing board in an attempt to give shape to the new Council.

As far as the second major cluster of issues is concerned, namely, those relating to other matters, my delegation is satisfied that appreciable progress was made during the last session of the Assembly. The early consideration to be given by this body to the report of the Security Council testifies to the possibilities of the greater communication and cooperation that can exist between these two important organs. The Council has, to its credit, taken several initiatives to make its work more open and transparent. As it continues in this direction, both the credibility and the legitimacy of its actions will be commensurately enhanced. With regard to the question of decision-making and all other matters related to the Council, these are likely to fall into place once the major issues are resolved.

In order to build upon the progress that was achieved at the forty-eighth session, the Working Group will need to find a mechanism for sifting the many ideas and proposals which have been advanced in order to identify those which can be translated by consensus into reality. It will therefore have to go beyond set statements of position to an informal and frank exchange of views designed to pinpoint possible areas of agreement. The use of such a mechanism must, of course, be without prejudice to the integrity of the Working Group, which should remain at all times open and transparent in its functions. Consequently, all matters treated by any auxiliary mechanism must be *ad referendum* to the Group as a whole.

We may also do well at this stage to give some thought to the time frame within which our work might be completed. In its wisdom, the Assembly placed no constraints that would prevent us from giving ample consideration to all the important issues before us. We should therefore not force those issues to any premature conclusion, but rather test them thoroughly for

widespread acceptance. None the less, we should not unduly delay a process which is aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Security Council to deal with the many challenges which it now faces in the maintenance of international peace and security. The sooner this goal is achieved, the better it would be for the entire international community.

My delegation is confident that under Mr. Essy's leadership, and with the able assistance of his two Vice-Chairmen, the Working Group will continue to make progress in the discharge of its mandate. The celebration next year of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary is certain to provide a strong psychological impetus to the process. We would therefore hope that, without being strait-jacketed by any considerations of time, we will work diligently to bring our labour to an early and full fruition.

Mr. Batu (Turkey): The crucial challenge before us today is to make the United Nations a real centre for universal solidarity by improving its effectiveness and by harmonizing its work with the new imperatives of our times. In this context, the focus of attention should be the Security Council, which bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The widespread demands for making that principal organ more representative, responsive, transparent and accountable should be met. The new international political environment requires the democratization of the Council. The Council has to be restructured to reflect the new realities. In order to enable the Council to discharge its expanded responsibilities more effectively, the moral authority of the Council should be reinforced. These are the pressing needs to be met in order to have guaranteed international support in responding to new challenges and threats to international peace and security. It is in line with this understanding that my delegation has actively participated in the first two rounds of the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council.

Having taken note of the report on the progress of work of the Open-ended Working Group, we believe that the next stage of deliberations should be held on the basis of concrete proposals. We must build on the work done in the course of the forty-eighth session.

There are mainly two aspects of our work which require equal attention. We have to enhance the representative weight of the Council and democratize its method of work.

Let me dwell on the first point. The enhancement of the representativeness of the Council cannot be confined merely to a quantitative expansion of its size. The modalities of the enlargement should also be elaborated. We do not believe that an increase in the overall number of seats alone will suffice in securing more equitable and representative participation in the work of the Council. The enlargement should be coupled with a fair system of workable rotation. In this context, we firmly believe that the proposal submitted by Italy to the Open-ended Working Group merits careful consideration.

The idea that there is a correlation between the size of the Council and its efficiency is inherently misleading. The determining factor in increasing the efficiency of the work of the Council will be the political will of its members and the support of the general membership, rather than its size. The Council will become more effective when it is perceived by the international community as being more equitably representative of the general membership, and thus more authoritative in its decisions.

The present dichotomy - a Council that is relatively more efficient in its deliberations, yet, in turn, less effective in implementing its decisions - calls for thorough consideration.

It is in line with this reasoning that we endorse, in general, the proposal by Italy. We hold the view that the Security Council should be enlarged by 10 additional non-permanent members. This new membership should rotate among a list of countries. However, this list could be updated after a certain time so that it does not lead to new privileges.

On the other hand, we believe that extending the concept of separate constituencies to the distribution of all elective seats is worthy of consideration. Designating, for each elective seat, separate constituencies representing more or less equal potential and means, as well as a common determination to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, could enhance the representative weight of the Council and ensure more equitable geographical distribution. Setting up new constituencies for election could be one of the most effective ways to rectify the shortcomings and injustices of the present election system.

Along with this idea of radical reform, we could also start thinking about finding ways and means within the geographical groups of ensuring a fair, equitable and workable system of rotation for all the non-permanent seats, including the 10 additional new members. My delegation will present these ideas in written form to the Open-ended Working Group in its new round of deliberations.

Reform of the Council's working methods is the other aspect of our work. I do not wish to go into detail once again on this issue. We have explained our views in the Working Group, and we will continue to elaborate on them. However, I should like to underline that most of the ideas that have been presented to the Working Group in this respect do not require an amendment to the Charter. We believe, therefore, that we could finalize this part of our work more easily. In the same vein, the Council's rules of procedure, which are still provisional after almost 50 years, should be finalized to reflect the spirit of democratization.

Our aim should be to make the Open-ended Working Group a genuine driving force for real reform. We have to create a Security Council that is more effective, representative, transparent, accountable, credible and authoritative. This is a historic task which we must fulfil.

Mr. Azwai (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(interpretation from Arabic):* The adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 47/62 on the question of equitable representation on and increase of the membership of the Security Council reflects the extent of the determination of the Members of the United Nations to put an end to the unfair composition of the Security Council. As currently composed and working as it has been, the Council is in need of reform in order to respond to changes in the international situation. On the international scene, new States have emerged, while the role of others has diminished. Moreover, the number of Members of the United Nations, on whose behalf the Council works, has greatly increased.

By its resolution 48/26, the Assembly established a Working Group entrusted with the study of all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council, and other matters relating to the Security Council. During the last session, the Working Group held numerous meetings, and the results of its work are contained in document A/48/47. My delegation has perused the contents of that report and believes that the next phase of the Group's work will be particularly important, in view of the fact that it has to submit to the Assembly specific recommendations on the increase in the membership of the Security Council and on reforming its methods of work. In this respect, my country believes that, in carrying out its mandate, the Working Group should base itself on the principle of the full sovereign equality of States. The methodology of increasing the membership should be guided by this principle and not by particular choices or by any specific political, economic or military considerations.

Moreover, my delegation believes that the Working Group should consider the other part of its mandate: the question of the equitable geographical distribution of the membership of the Council, and the correction of the current imbalance in its composition due to the under-representation on the Council of developing countries, especially those of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Increasing the membership of the Security Council and democratizing its composition should be studied as an integral part of the process of reforming the Council and of improving its methods of work, including its decision-making processes and the manner in which its resolutions are adopted. In this respect, my country's delegation would like to underscore the need for the proposed reform to ensure that the Security Council should work within its competence under the Charter and to do so with full objectivity and neutrality, without interfering in the internal affairs of States under pressure by certain States or in response to their wishes. In addition, the Security Council, in order for it to be able to deal effectively with international questions, should not usurp the functions of other bodies or involve itself in questions that fall within the competence of other main organs of the United Nations.

My country's delegation also would like to underscore the need to do away with the factors that impede the performance by the Council of its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, especially the power of veto, which should be eliminated since the reasons behind its granting have ceased to exist. The continued existence of that power would perpetuate the lack of full sovereign co-equality amongst the States Members of the United Nations.

Effective reform of the Security Council and, in particular, the improvement of its working methods, necessitate transparency in the Council's activities. This transparency should characterize also the stage preceding the adoption of resolutions. My country's delegation believes that, to achieve this, the Council should consult

with the countries concerned on the questions of which it is seized. The Council should also consult with the relevant regional organizations. Previous practice indicates that the Council has ignored the need to engage in such consultation. Some of its States members have even refused to take into consideration the views of certain States that were directly concerned with questions before the Council. To guarantee the universal acceptance and implementation of Security Council resolutions, my country's delegation believes that, before deciding to adopt such resolutions, the Security Council should engage in wider consultation - not in the context of informal consultations, but in formal meetings open to all Member States.

In conclusion, my country's delegation would like once again to underline the extreme importance of this question, which is directly related to international peace and security and to relations between nations and peoples. That is why we should take the necessary time and seriously study this issue in order for us to be able to decide on and introduce the desired reforms of the Security Council in a democratic manner that would emphasize the responsibility of all peoples, big or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, in creating a new world of peace and cooperation that will be free from policies of hegemony and influence. The parameters of such a new world should be such that they would engender continued cooperation amongst States and create development and growth opportunities that measure up to the challenges of poverty, ignorance and backwardness and the need to consolidate peace amongst States and peoples.

Mr. Owada (Japan): Over the past two and a half weeks, during the Assembly's general debate, we heard the representatives of more than 170 countries. A great majority of them touched upon the question of the reform of the United Nations, particularly as it relates to the Security Council. This is clear evidence of the keen interest that Member States have in the question of the reform of the Security Council and a manifestation of their political will to achieve concrete results in this exercise. If we are serious in our endeavour to strengthen the United Nations as the centrepiece of the international order that is to be consolidated in the post-cold-war world, it is important that we maintain and even intensify this momentum to move forward on this crucial question during the current session of the General Assembly.

In this post-cold-war era, only through joint efforts of the international community can we sustain and promote world peace and stability. The United Nations is expected to play a central role in this concerted endeavour of ours. It was against that background that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Yohei Kono, stated in his address to the General Assembly on 27 September that Japan was resolved to conduct a proactive foreign policy in its effort to assume its share of responsibility and to contribute to the future well-being of humankind on a level commensurate with its political and economic status.

The Foreign Minister expounded the basic philosophy underlying this resolve of Japan in relation to its international responsibility in the following terms:

> "Reflecting with remorse upon the Second World War, Japan has never wavered from its commitment to contribute to world peace and prosperity. Japan does not, nor will it, resort to the use of force prohibited by its Constitution. Japan will remain resolutely a nation of peace. Neither possessing nuclear arms nor exporting weapons, Japan continues to be actively engaged in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. In accordance with what I have just stated, Japan has dispatched members of its Self-Defence Forces, as well as civilian personnel, to several countries, including Cambodia and Mozambique, in response to requests by the United Nations. Japan intends to continue to cooperate actively in such United Nations peace-keeping operations.
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> "At the same time, Japan is determined to enhance its contributions to efforts on global issues in [such] economic and social areas ... [as] development, the environment, human rights, refugees, population, AIDS and narcotics." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 7th meeting, pp. 12-13)*

It is on the basis of that philosophy of Japan that Foreign Minister Kono stated that, with the endorsement of many countries, Japan was prepared to discharge the responsibilities of a permanent member of the Security Council.

Japan is firmly convinced that the United Nations must be reformed to meet the many major challenges that the world now faces and that to this end the Security Council must be reformed to render it more reflective of today's world and to enable it to respond more effectively to the growing expectations of the international community. In particular, the Council will have to be

restructured to reflect the new realities of the world, where the membership of the United Nations has dramatically expanded and where new global Powers have emerged with the will and the capacity to carry out greater international responsibilities. Needless to say, the very purpose of the reform of the Security Council is to enhance the effectiveness of that organ. It is incumbent upon all of us, therefore, to exercise our utmost care to ensure that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council are not jeopardized as a result of our attempt to effect reforms.

If the United Nations is to play a more active and effective role for the maintenance of international peace and security, as we believe it must, reform of the Security Council is without a doubt the most urgent task now facing the Organization. From that viewpoint, my delegation is gratified to note that the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council has conducted extensive and intensive discussions on this crucial question since the beginning of this year. The Working Group submitted its report to the General Assembly at its previous session, and the Assembly has now decided that the Group should continue its work during the current, forty-ninth, session of the General Assembly. In the light of the discussion held thus far and on the basis of that report, I wish to offer a few salient points which should guide our future deliberations within the Working Group, so that we may make further progress on this all-important question.

As a basic framework of our future endeavour, it is imperative to build upon what we have achieved in the course of our discussions within the Working Group. A large number of Member States have actively participated in the deliberations of the Working Group and expressed their views and positions upon all the pertinent aspects of the issue. As a result, I believe that there has emerged a consensus on the point that, in view of the paramount importance of the Security Council, the reform efforts should be directed towards enhancing its legitimacy and credibility so that it can function truly effectively as the executive organ of the United Nations entrusted with the primary task of maintaining international peace and security.

More specifically, it would seem generally agreed that a genuine effort to reform the Security Council will have to be pursued in two directions: reform of its organization and reform of its functioning.

First, with regard to the question of organization of the Security Council, it is noteworthy that there has been a convergence of views in the Working Group on the need to enlarge the membership of the Council. In considering how this might be done, my delegation believes that it is essential to address the following three fundamental aspects:

> the emergence of new global Powers, which prompts us to envisage a limited increase in the number of permanent seats in addition to the current permanent members;
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> the drastic expansion of United Nations membership, which requires us to consider an appropriate increase in the number of non-permanent seats to improve the representativeness of the Security Council;
>
> the imbalance that has emerged in the geographical representation within the Council, which suggests that we should redress the overall distribution of seats.

Secondly, with regard to the question of the functioning of the Security Council, issues such as improving the transparency of its work, strengthening the communication between members and non-members and so forth, have been raised under the rubric of "other matters related to the Security Council". A number of proposals have been submitted on this score, including a few by my own delegation. My delegation believes that it is now incumbent upon us to set out to examine if and to what extent these proposals are feasible and practicable. In any case, we firmly believe that improving the working methods of the Council will greatly contribute to the enhancement of the legitimacy and credibility of that organ.

I wish to reiterate that reform of the organization of the Council and reform of its functioning, as I have briefly described, are the two issues which together form the basis of an overall plan to reform the Security Council. It is the considered view of my delegation that these two issues therefore should be examined concurrently and agreement should be reached on both issues as soon as possible.

Finally, I should like to touch upon a procedural, but none the less important, question as to how the Working Group might best organize its work and proceed with its deliberations during the current session of the General Assembly. As I noted earlier, the Working Group is expected to continue its efforts, building upon

the results of its work during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. In the view of my delegation, the next round of the deliberations should therefore be qualitatively different from the previous round. To put it more specifically, I believe we should go beyond the exchange of respective positions of different delegations to move into the stage of formulating a package of concrete proposals to form a basis of agreement.

In order to proceed along these lines, my delegation believes it is important that the Working Group commence its deliberations as early as possible. As a prerequisite to this, we have to decide promptly upon the composition of the Bureau for the current session. I wish to state that my delegation is in favour of the solution that the President of the current session of the General Assembly serve as the Chairman of the Working Group during the present session, following the practice established last year. Further, my delegation strongly hopes that the representatives of Finland and Singapore will continue to serve as Vice-Chairmen in view of the importance of maintaining the continuity of our work and in the light of the invaluable contribution they made to the work of the Working Group during the last session of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, in order to ensure progress in our work in a constructive direction, the Working Group will benefit greatly from informal consultations to be conducted parallel with its formal meetings. This will enable us to winnow out various options that are presented and expedite the process for realizing the convergence of views in our work.

Let me close by expressing my delegation's sincere hope that the deliberations of the Working Group on this important topic will be accelerated, so that we may hope to reach agreement on a reform plan in time for the commemorative fiftieth session of the General Assembly next year. My delegation is prepared to offer its full cooperation in order to achieve this goal in our common endeavour.

Mr. Ladsous (France) *(interpretation from French)*: We have now come to the end of a year of intensive discussions in the Assembly's Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. This year of difficult discussions was, we believe, useful, even if it has not yet resulted in any narrowing of the gap between our positions. We have today, more clearly than a year ago, a list of the problems to be resolved in order to reach an acceptable formula, and a list of the diverse aspirations of delegations in this exercise.

This will be useful as we continue our work, in the phase that should now begin, of trying to reach a successful conclusion. I wish to thank Mr. Insanally for his personal contribution to the success of the consultations during the last session. I should also like to commend Mr. Chew Tai Soo, the Ambassador of Singapore, and Mr. Breitenstein, the Ambassador of Finland, who were outstanding Vice-Chairmen and who are to continue in that role this year. We are all very happy about that. The interest publicly demonstrated on the subject by the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Amara Essy, is also an excellent omen, and we are pleased that he has assumed office at a decisive time in the exercise.

The lesson that we draw from the work of the forty-eighth session is that we must show plenty of realism in order to devise a formula for enlarging the Security Council while meeting the desire of Members for greater representativeness, compatible with effectiveness in confronting emergencies which the Council must respond.

There is no miracle solution here. But some realities should, we hope, gradually be accepted.

First of all, some States that are capable of making a decisive contribution to the United Nations in the maintenance of peace want to shoulder greater responsibilities in the Security Council. Germany and Japan are, in my delegation's opinion, fully eligible to sit in the Security Council as permanent members, with all the prerogatives and obligations of the present permanent members. My delegation's view is that it would be in the best interests of the United Nations to grant seats to these two States to enable them to shoulder the responsibilities to which they aspire.

Secondly, an increase in the representation of the more advanced countries must not create an imbalance that operates to the detriment of the developing world. This means that if Japan and Germany were to join the Security Council as permanent members, a seat should be given to the developing countries to preserve a desirable balance.

As for the modalities to ensure such complementary representation, my delegation is open to all suggestions at this stage; we do not rule out anything. For us this is not a question of principle on which permanent members

have any particular concept to defend. We need to find a compromise in the form of an arrangement or set of arrangements which it is generally agreed improves the representation in the Council. That might mean permanent membership for certain major countries from the South. My delegation does not see any obstacle in principle to that. It might also mean, either as a complementary or as an alternative formula, an increase in the number of non-permanent members, provided that the increase is only moderate and would not paralyse the Council's work. We could envisage a membership of about 20. Making the non-permanent members eligible for another term after their two years in the Security Council would provide some flexibility in the formulas for representation.

On the other aspect of the discussions under way - that is, enhancing the Security Council's methods of work with a view to strengthening it, our goals are equally clear. We wish to respect the balance of the present configuration of the organs by using all the possibilities it offers to establish trust between the Security Council and the Member States, in particular those that are making a special contribution to international peace and security by providing troops to peace-keeping operations.

The Council has already made considerable progress on all these questions in recent months. The abiding concern of its members is to ensure clarity in the way its decisions are taken and transmitted. We are sure that if we are vigilant on this score, we shall have even better results. There are of course some principles that we intend to defend vigorously: First, the Council must remain the sole master of its decision-making process. Secondly, it should not give way to the temptation to micromanage peace-keeping operations; they must continue to be managed by the Secretary-General. Thirdly, it should be careful not to make the consultation meetings too formal; the very point of the consultations is that they allow for great flexibility of organization.

But, without infringing those principles, the Council does have one way to ensure that Members of the Organization get a better hearing. Quite simply, as the French Minister for Foreign Affairs said in his address to the General Assembly, it is to reinvigorate public debate in the Council. To ensure efficiency in dealing with its heavy workload, the Council has for several years worked almost exclusively in informal consultations and, accordingly, public debate has been reduced to a succession of routine speeches delivered after the Council has already determined what decision it will take. We believe that, without giving up the advantages of informal consultations, we should enrich the debate by allowing members of the Council to have a dialogue with the Member States of the Organization in a public meeting before a position has been decided on - at least on important questions. The frustration that many delegations feel about the current methods of working could be resolved without impairing the Council's ability to react to situations.

I am convinced that there will be much decisive progress next year on both aspects of this work, heralding a welcome compromise between different but quite legitimate aspirations of the Members of the United Nations about the future of the Organization and the role they will play in it.

Mrs. Frechette (Canada): I should like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his election and pay tribute to his predecessor, who skillfully guided the work of the General Assembly and the Working Group on the reform of the Security Council. We would also like to thank both Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Singapore, whose tireless efforts greatly facilitated our work.

The year that has passed since our last debate on this subject has been fruitful as we have been able within the Working Group to begin a dialogue and start to identify certain areas of convergence. As indicated in the report of the Working Group there is a convergence of views on the need to increase the Council's membership. This is in itself a worthwhile result, given the complexity of the exercise. We hope that we will be able from now on to devote our energies to discussing the terms of expansion.

The report also rightly notes that the Council has taken certain steps to improve its methods of work and procedures. The progress made in this respect bodes well for further transparency in its work and increased consultations with interested Member States.

In our opinion, the expansion of the Security Council should accomplish four objectives: to make the Council more representative, to improve its efficiency, to improve its credibility and to improve its equity.

An expanded Council will be more representative if a wider variety of interests and points of view can be expressed, while keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution set out in the Charter. However, this does not mean that members of the

Council must become representatives of groups of Member States. On the contrary, it is important that while conducting broad consultations Council members continue to assume the individual responsibility conferred on them by the Charter and through their election by the General Assembly.

An expanded Council will continue to be efficient if its expansion is limited; it will still be able to make prompt and effective decisions as it is called upon to do.

An expanded Council will be more credible if its composition reflects the emergence of new important actors on the international scene. But it should also reflect the sustained contribution of certain countries over the years to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization. We think that it would be in the interests of the Organization for these countries to have more frequent or systematic access to Council membership. Their presence would increase the Council's credibility, since these nations should be willing to assume, or to continue to assume, a larger share of our collective responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Finally, an expanded, more equitable Council will improve the chances for countries that seek Council membership.

The viewpoints of Member States on the expansion of the Council are well known. It is now time to step up our work and start identifying other areas of convergence, as the Chairman of our Working Group attempted to do last year. For example, we have detected an emerging convergence of views on the desirable number of members - in the low twenties - for an expanded Council.

There is no miracle solution to the question of expanding the Security Council. Therefore, we must first of all continue to approach this exercise by focusing our efforts on our common objectives and by being flexible on the modalities of expansion. We should be ready to use our imagination and to consider different options. In this connection, new ideas such as those advanced by Italy and Australia could provide elements of a solution, and they merit further study.

Canada is open to a number of possibilities: creating new permanent seats, establishing a category of semi-permanent seats, creating new non-permanent seats with or without the possibility of re-election, or reviewing the composition of regional groups. In our opinion, none of these ideas excludes any other.

We think that the concept of semi-permanent seats, to be shared for two-year periods by two or more countries, is particularly interesting and warrants further exploration. The creation of such a category would have the double advantage of allowing countries that more fully meet the requirements of Article 23 of the Charter to sit more frequently on the Council and of lessening the number of candidates for non-permanent Member status.

Although the Council has made a great deal of progress in this direction, we feel that it must continue to improve its methods of work. In particular, Canada feels that the Council can find practical means of institutionalizing its consultations with troop-contributing nations. At present, 75 countries are providing contingents - 78,000 troops in all - for United Nations peace-keeping operations. The Council must take into account this rapid and dramatic evolution in the importance of peace-keeping, and enter into direct and regular consultations with the countries that volunteer to implement the decisions of the Security Council.

Without challenging the Council's responsibility for making the decisions required, this means that the Council should hold consultations with troop-contributing nations when renewing mandates and when significant events occur during the course of these operations. We hope that the Council will clearly recognize this necessity and fully commit itself to such consultations.

Members can rely on the cooperation of our delegation to make constructive progress in our work as we seek to achieve concrete results as soon as possible.

Mr. Laing (Belize): The delegation of Belize wishes, through our current President, to thank his predecessor, the former President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, and the Ambassadors of Finland and Singapore for their commendable efforts in steering the deliberations of last session's Working Group on this important question. We are confident that under our current President's able leadership this matter will be significantly advanced during the current session. There is hardly any matter of greater importance on this Assembly's agenda. After all, peace and security are indispensable for effective democracy and development. Hence, democratization of the Security Council must be the critical issue of our time.

The existence of the veto is the main reason why the process of reform has been retarded. Its existence partly explains the variety of claims for permanent membership by individual States and, we have been given to understand, by some who would speak on behalf of some of the United Nations regions. It has motivated such interesting proposals as that for semi-permanent membership. All of this is quite understandable, since the main attribute of permanent membership is the veto.

During the past several months, this delegation and several others have proposed that, if it cannot be completely abolished, the veto institution should be reformed. Of the two reform proposals that Belize has endorsed, the one which seems to have the largest number of supporters is the idea that the purported exercise of the veto by one permanent member must, to be successful, have the support of at least one other permanent member.

With the veto so modified, the notion of permanent membership can itself be modified. After all, the rationale for permanent membership, as we know it, becomes irrelevant if there is no absolute right of veto. The discussion in the Working Group during the past several months has made it clear that it is this attribute of permanent membership that has stymied our efforts to agree on several matters. These include criteria for membership of the Council, the question of equity as it relates to developing countries and the number of members of an enlarged Council.

It is clear that in the new world order, democracy and equality are the paramount values. For self-evident reasons, these should be reflected in various aspects of each body of our Organization, especially in the title and incidents of membership of the Security Council. This delegation therefore proposes that there should be two classes of members: indefinite members, to replace the existing category of permanent members, and regular members, to replace the present category of non-permanent members. Each indefinite member would sit on the Council as long as it satisfied the relevant criteria. Let it be stressed that our proposals are equally applicable if the two present classes of permanent and non-permanent members are retained.

The criteria for indefinite membership should be grounded in the realities of international relations. This delegation proposes that the most crucial realities here are size of population, contribution to the Organization's budget and contribution to international peace and security. This delegation therefore proposes that the threshold for indefinite membership should be a population of 100 million. To the population threshold should be added the criterion of contribution to the Organization's budget. This delegation proposes that the minimum contribution threshold should be 5 percent. In this connection, we refer to the British proposals on assessment currently being informally discussed. A higher assessment of an additional, for example, 2 percent over the initial 5 percent would compensate for a population deficit of between 10 and 40 million.

Finally, countries with populations in excess of 800 million would automatically be indefinite members without having to satisfy additional criteria.

The chief criterion for regular Council membership would be membership of the United Nations. Such seats would be allocated on a strictly equitable geographical basis, utilizing the Organization's continental regions, and otherwise on the basis of Article 23 of the Charter, as at present written.

It is further proposed that a State that fails to satisfy the population threshold for indefinite membership might, by agreement, combine with one or more adjacent States as a composite or constituency indefinite member. Adjacency would include strategic adjacency across a body of water, no matter how large. This delegation would like to stress that under this modality, the right to vote and the exercise of the veto would be rotated, possibly at intervals of one to three months.

The composite modality is clearly a form of constituency association, which is becoming relatively popular in organizations and agencies that provide specific benefits or have defined and tangible functions. It should therefore work well in the Security Council.

It would work particularly well in connection with regular membership. In this context it would dramatically improve the opportunities of many scores of developing countries which, as demonstrated by a survey referred to by the delegation of Italy, have never been members of the Council. Furthermore, the composite or constituency modality would encourage effective regionalism and the establishment of regional arrangements or agencies under Chapter VIII of the Charter, since membership in such arrangements or agencies as are approved by the Council could be deemed to satisfy the adjacency criterion. This proposal would go far towards de-emphasizing the elitism that is now endemic in the Council.

The composite or constituency notion might be regarded as novel. In fact, the very essence of the concept of security ushered in by the Second World War and the Charter is its shared nature. This is underscored by Chapter VIII and by the main institutions of Chapter VII, including collective self-defence. Current trends in peace-keeping, peacemaking and humanitarian assistance would appear to confirm this point. Therefore, the Belize proposals, while giving full scope to the present, somewhat arbitrary, continental regions, also emphasize a variety of types of genuine security regions.

It is proposed that the maximum number of seats in the Council would be approximately 23. Of these, there would be a maximum of 9 indefinite members and a minimum of 14 regular members. Since, in both categories, a composite or constituency group of two or more States would count as one member, the actual number of participating States could be considerably larger than 23.

Whatever the surface details of my delegation's proposals, it may be that these ideas are as simple as one can expect proposals on the maintenance of peace and security to be in our twenty-first-century world of diverse regions, cultures and economic and social realities.

Mr. Somavia (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: General Assembly resolution 47/62, adopted late in 1992, which requested the Secretary-General to invite Member States to submit written comments on a possible review of the membership of the Security Council, clearly indicated the vital importance of this agenda item, not only for the Council itself but for the future of the United Nations as a whole.

We are therefore not surprised at the considerable interest that has been awakened by the discussion on the subject that has been held over the past two years, one marked by a wide participation that has been highly instructive. That interest has been evident in the many written replies received by the Secretary-General in keeping with the aforementioned resolution and, particularly, in the General Assembly Working Group so effectively and seriously guided by Ambassador Samuel Insanally, with the invaluable assistance of the two Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representatives of Finland, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein, and of Singapore, Ambassador Chew Tai Soo, whom I congratulate for their excellent work.

Similarly, the enormous importance Member States attach to this subject has been demonstrated in the general debates of the last two sessions of the Assembly, in 1993 and this year, during the course of which nearly every Head of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs made reference to the item. There can be no doubt that a clear consensus exists among Members of the United Nations on the need and urgency to proceed to reform the structures and procedures of the Security Council.

While the report on the progress made by the Working Group has been factual in nature where we might have hoped to see it reflect some progress on substantive questions, we believe that debate within that Group has been as useful as it has been necessary.

The open, frank and constructive participation of so many delegations expressing often very different positions is, in our opinion, an unavoidable phase through which we must pass if we wish to achieve a broad and solid political agreement that will fully reflect the majority will of Member States.

Thus, we must not curb this impetus but must increase our efforts to achieve, within a reasonable period of time, a consensus on the substantive issues under discussion.

My delegation has always felt that we must constantly bear in mind the fact that the restructuring of the Security Council must be especially aimed at strengthening its effectiveness, its representativeness and the legitimacy of its task, and at making the Council more democratic, to enable it better to meet present and future challenges. We believe that the Council, by carrying out its principal task of maintaining international peace and security, will help build the safer and more humane world to which we all aspire.

We are also convinced that those concepts, which are closely linked, are related to a creative and standing relationship between the Council and the General Assembly and other organs and organizations, as well as with States that are not members of the Council, and related also to the reform of the working methods and procedures of the Council. This is especially needed when it comes to countries involved in peace-keeping operations, which have legitimate interests and whose proposals must be heard.

Similarly, Chile's delegation deems it especially important for reform to lead to greater transparency in decision-making, something that is indispensable if we want to enhance the Council's legitimacy and credibility.

We also believe that all States Members must agree to comply with its mandates as provided for by the Charter.

The Government of Chile has welcomed the progress towards greater transparency in the Council's practices and procedures that do not require changes in the Charter. We view this as a first step in the right direction.

A balanced increase in the number of members of the Security Council has become a necessity in today's international climate. In our view, that increase must reflect the current number of States Members of the Organization and the reality of the new international scene in all its aspects, as well as equitable representation for all existing regional groups.

We agree with the general view that has emerged from the discussions of the Working Group that the adjustment in the Council's membership should not exceed 24 or 25, so as the better to reflect present-day realities. While it is of special importance to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's work, we believe that that should not become a pretext for inhibiting the expansion of its membership.

The President returned to the Chair.

Because of the importance my delegation attaches to the need for greater democratization and balance in the Council's composition and decision-making mechanism, we have proposed, *inter alia*, the establishment of a category of regional members with an extended mandate. A new category of this kind would give countries in the main regions of the developed world - as regional representatives or representatives with an extended mandate - a say in the Council's decisions, without the right of veto, and with the possibility of re-election.

We have also said that we favour the establishment of a category of permanent member without the right of veto. This would enable countries with the necessary economic and political capacity to contribute to the work of the Council. We repeat that we are not proponents of an extension of the right of veto. We welcome the fact that the veto has been used less in recent years, and we look forward to the devising of formulas to avoid its use in the future.

As regards categories, we have considered the retention of the category of non-permanent member without the possibility of re-election; the criteria for their election are contained in Article 23 of the Charter, but we must bear in mind that this Article refers also to equitable geographical distribution.

The Security Council cannot be designed to take account of the strategic needs or privileges of just some States. It must faithfully meet the criteria of wide representativeness if it is to enhance the international community's unequivocal and universal support for all its resolutions and decisions. At stake here is not just the reform *per se* of an organ of the system but the very credibility and prestige of the United Nations itself.

The Government of Chile, aware that this item will pose major challenges and involve major responsibilities, aspires to a seat on the Security Council for the period 1996 and 1997 with a view to contributing to the new spirit of cooperation in international relations. As the Foreign Minister of Chile pointed out at this rostrum a few days ago, we are convinced that we can legitimately and properly represent the interests of Latin America and the Caribbean, and indeed of the international community, in this important organ.

We should like to express our satisfaction at the open-mindedness and the active participation that have so far been demonstrated in the treatment of this very complex item. We hope that we shall soon see the consensus necessary to achieving progress in respect of the substantive aspects of our debate. Thus we support Japan's suggestion that the Assembly give swift approval to a package of specific proposals. To this end, we call upon all delegations to act with flexibility and pragmatism in the negotiations that are to begin, so that we may soon have a restructured Security Council better able to meet the urgent requirements of our times.

Mr. Pálsson (Iceland): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden - in addressing the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

I should like, first of all, to take this opportunity to thank the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, for his wise leadership of the Open-ended Working Group.

Statements by Foreign Ministers and other representatives of the Nordic countries who participated in the general debate of the General Assembly's current session attest to the importance the Nordic countries continue to attach to this issue. May I refer also to the

joint Nordic position paper that was presented in the Working Group last June. This paper covered, in a preliminary way, most of the questions under discussion. Its aim was, first and foremost, to contribute to the ongoing debate and, in so doing, to facilitate the building of the widest possible support for what the Nordic countries regard as necessary reform of the Security Council. We stand ready to develop further the thoughts contained in the paper, in cooperation with other interested delegations.

While I do not wish to recapitulate the paper's main points, which remain valid, I should like to use this opportunity to reiterate the Nordic countries' strong support for limited expansion of Council membership. This would strengthen the Council's ability to act rapidly and effectively, while reflecting the growing number of States Members of the Organization. Furthermore, particular importance should be given to the question of additional seats for non-permanent members, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution. It is also the view of the Nordic countries that only a limited number of new seats should be designated as permanent.

Since June the Working Group has submitted a report to the General Assembly. The Nordic countries welcome the report and appreciate the Group's dedicated efforts in harmonizing the different views that were put forward. At the same time, it is clear that the complex questions that the Working Group has been called upon to deal with require further study and reflection. I should like to reiterate the Nordic countries' keen interest in pursuing this matter further.

In the general debate several countries presented a number of ideas and thoughts on how to take the issue forward. In the view of the Nordic countries, time is now needed to contemplate the various new ideas. However, this does not mean that the matter should be allowed to lapse. We believe that consultations with all interested delegations should take place during the main part of the General Assembly session. A realistic and regular schedule of meetings of the Open-ended Working Group should be arranged for that purpose. Such meetings could be supplemented, as appropriate, by smaller, informal group discussions on specific issues.

Whatever the form, the Nordic countries consider it important that this work be continued with a view to arriving, in due course, at a conclusion acceptable to all.

Mr. Inderfurth (United States of America): Let me begin, Sir, by repeating President Clinton's congratulations to you on your recent election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. The United States is pleased to see you in the Chair, and we look forward to working with you to ensure a successful session.

I should like also to express our thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for his leadership of the General Assembly during its forty-eighth session. We are grateful for his efforts in his capacity as President of the Assembly and for his work as Chairman, together with his Vice-Chairmen, the Ambassadors of Finland and of Singapore, in guiding and assisting the Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council.

From our perspective, the debate in the Working Group was highly constructive. While no conclusions were drawn, as noted in the progress report, there was a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged. Of course, differences remain over how best to achieve an expansion, but this is to be expected on an issue of such high national interest to so many. Moreover, in our judgement, the debate gave rise to several broadly supported principles that could guide future efforts as we seek final agreement.

Several of these principles were reiterated by our colleagues during the general debate just concluded. Let me summarize them. First, as the statements of Argentina, Austria and Poland rightly stressed, the test of acceptability of any decision to expand the Council must be that it broadens participation while safeguarding operational efficiency and effectiveness. Secondly, the Netherlands, Costa Rica, Indonesia and others have reminded us that a country's specific strengths - its capacity for constructive global influence and to undertake and sustain heavy global responsibilities - are a critical test of eligibility for permanent membership. Finally, Kenya, Canada, New Zealand, Spain and many others have emphasized that the goal of a stronger, more effective Security Council, clearly served by a careful expansion, also requires greater transparency and openness in Council procedures.

If we take these principles to be our compass, we cannot fail to see our course clearly. Indeed, the views of the United States are precisely along these lines. First, we welcome changes to the Council's composition

that enhance its representativeness while protecting its effectiveness and efficiency. Secondly, the existing permanent members of the Security Council are countries with global political and economic influence and a capacity to contribute to peace and security by concrete measures on a global basis. Thirdly, guided by the criteria just noted, we enthusiastically endorse Japan and Germany for permanent membership. Fourthly, we also see the need for an increase in non-permanent seats, namely, an addition of three seats for a total Council membership of 20. Fifthly, in order to give Member States greater influence over the selection of non-permanent Council members without restricting the opportunity of small countries to serve as Council members, we favour exempting non-permanent seats from the prohibition of re-election. Finally, the Security Council is actively pursuing means by which non-members may contribute to its work. The United States is directly engaged in this effort, which has already produced valuable results, and we believe that it must continue.

Our pursuit of a stronger Council reflects our conclusion that, to meet the challenges increasingly entrusted to its care, the Council will require a broader and deeper partnership - a partnership to lead collective efforts and to share the many and varied burdens. This has three implications for today's Security Council.

First, it means that the nucleus of capabilities represented by the permanent members should be expanded. The addition of Japan and Germany will join the energies, talents and resources of these enormously capable countries to the task of safeguarding our common security. Indeed, Japan and Germany have shown themselves eager and well-equipped to act in newly critical areas such as peace-building and conflict prevention.

Secondly, an enhanced partnership means two things for the non-permanent seats. They ought to be increased in number without damaging Council decision-making and the rotation of countries in those seats should assure that the Council can benefit from the participation of those countries, including small States, with a record of constructive involvement in United Nations peace and security efforts.

Lastly, to build a deeper, broader partnership requires that the Security Council move firmly to establish strong, sustainable working relationships with those non-members, such as troop contributors, whose continued support is essential to the success of Council members and mandates. On the latter point, we want to emphasize that important steps have already been taken to improve the flow of information about Council decisions and to provide occasion for troop contributors to offer views on matters pertinent to Council decisions on peace-keeping mandates. One example is a growing participation by Security Council members in troop-contributor meetings. This practice has enabled troop contributors concerned about some aspect of a proposed mandate change to inform Council members directly of their views. Indeed, in one instance it provided for direct exchanges on the elements of a proposed resolution.

A number of additional steps might be explored. One possibility is for Council members to make more regular use of selected troop-contributor meetings to invite comment on resolution elements concerning changes in peace-keeping mandates. While such meetings will still be chaired by the Secretariat, the role of the Secretariat in such cases could be to provide a venue for direct exchanges between Council members and troop contributors.

The United States is committed to exploring ways to strengthen working relations with troop contributors, and more openness and transparency are certainly possible. But I should caution that, in decision making, transparency is a good servant but a poor master. Too much will inhibit frank discussion and drive it away from the Council's chambers to settings in which privacy can be assured. That would not serve anyone's interests.

In closing, let me make a few points about process. First, over the course of the general debate, some speakers have urged their colleagues to delay any action on Security Council expansion for several years. They argue that the world is so unsettled today that it is unwise to enter into structural changes to the Security Council which are intended to be lasting. For the United States, this is a false choice. The case to strengthen the Council is compelling precisely because of the mounting tumult of the post-cold-war world and the dangers it poses to all of us, not 10 years from now but today.

Secondly, while the sessions of the Working Group were helpful in defining the spread of opinion and bringing forth the principles I mentioned, they are too large a venue for the frank give-and-take needed to bridge remaining differences. We therefore urge you, Sir, and the Bureau to consider inviting small, informal groups of Members to meet with you over the coming months to explore areas of common ground and possible formulas for reaching agreement on Council expansion. Sessions of the Working Group could be convened

periodically to take stock of these discussions and to review the progress made.

Finally, as others stated during the general debate, we too would like to see an acceleration of deliberations on this subject during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. But in this regard we do not favour a piecemeal approach. Rather, we are hopeful that agreement may be reached on all elements of an overall package by the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

Agenda item 8 ***(continued)***

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Second report of the General Committee (A/49/250/Add.1)

The President *(interpretation from French):* I draw the attention of representatives to the second report of the General Committee concerning the allocation of agenda items 152 and 92, two requests for the reconsideration of the allocation of sub-items (d) and (e) of agenda item 89, and a request by the delegation of Afghanistan for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional sub-item.

In paragraph 1 of the report, the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that item 152 of the agenda, entitled "Observer status for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the General Assembly", be considered directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that no further question beyond items 151 - "Observer status for the South Pacific Forum in the General Assembly" - and 152, on the granting of observer status in the General Assembly to applicants other than intergovernmental organizations, would be considered until criteria for the granting of such observer status have been established.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 2 of the report (A/49/250/Add.1), the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that, pursuant to resolution 48/166 of 21 December 1993, item 92 of the agenda, entitled "Agenda for development", should be considered in special plenary meetings at a high level and that subsequent negotiations on the item take place in the Second Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Next, I draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 3 of the report (A/49/250/Add.1).

The General Committee recommends that the General Assembly reconsider the allocation of sub-item (d) of agenda item 89, entitled "Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa", and that it decide to hold the debate in plenary meeting, on the understanding that action on the sub-item would be taken in the Second Committee.

I should like to point out that the Assembly must first decide that it wishes to reconsider the allocation of sub-item (d) of agenda item 89, under rule 81 of the rules of procedure.

May I take it the Assembly decides to reconsider the allocation of this sub-item?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I now take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 4 of the report (A/49/250/Add.1).

The General Committee recommends that the General Assembly reconsider its recommendation on the allocation of sub-item (e) of agenda item 89, entitled "Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", and that it decide to hold the debate in plenary meeting, on the understanding that action on the sub-item would be taken in the Second Committee.

I should like to point out to the Assembly that the Assembly must first decide that it wishes to reconsider the allocation of sub-item (e) of agenda item 89, under rule 81 of the rules of procedure.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to reconsider the allocation of this sub-item?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I now take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Next, I should like to draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 5(a) of the report (A/49/250/Add.1).

The General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional sub-item entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan", as sub-item (e) of agenda item 37.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include in its agenda this additional sub-item as sub-item (e) of agenda item 37?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 5 (b) of the report, the General Committee recommends that the sub-item be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President *(interpretation from French):* I should like to announce that tomorrow, Friday, 14 October 1994, the General Assembly will meet in the morning to continue its consideration of agenda item 33 and will also consider a report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 120 - "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador" - to be issued as document A/49/503. In the afternoon, the Assembly will conclude the debate on agenda item 33.

I should like to inform members that the Assembly will consider agenda item 152, entitled "Observer status for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the General Assembly", at a later date to be announced in the Journal.

Regarding item 92, "Agenda for development", the special plenary meetings at a high level to consider ways of promoting and giving political impetus to an agenda for development, which were called for in resolution 48/166 of 21 December 1993, will be held on Monday, 21 November.

On Friday, 21 October, the Assembly will hold the debate on sub-item (d) of agenda item 89, entitled "Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa".

On Monday, 7 November, the Assembly will hold the debate on sub-item (e) of agenda item 89, entitled "Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States."

Lastly, with regard to sub-item (e), on Afghanistan, of agenda item 37, "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the Assembly will consider agenda item 37 as a whole on Wednesday, 23 November.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.